

Newfields Planning Board
Public Hearing on Proposed Zoning Amendments
January 12, 2006

Attendance: Michael Price, William Meserve and Reuben Hull Town Planner.

Mike Price called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. This is the final public hearing on zoning amendments.

Buffer Provisions-Section 7.6

Alison Watts explained that the purpose of this amendment is to increase the buffer zone from 50 feet to 75 feet. She mentioned that we need to establish a mechanism that would allow someone to build in the buffer zone if they desired. Reuben stated that we could require that they come before the Planning Board for a conditional use permit after getting approval from the Conservation Commission.

As it stands now the only way someone could build in a buffer area would be to go to the Zoning Board after getting denial from the Planning Board. After adoption of the change the Planning Board will be able to grant a conditional use permit on the recommendation of the Conservation Commission.

Bill asked if we needed to define the area that would be included in the erosion control plan. It was decided that it did not need to be defined. A few changes were made to the wording of the ordinance. The amended ordinance will be voted on by ballot at the March 14, 2006 town elections.

Conservation Subdivision Ordinance-11.5

The changes to the Conservation Subdivision Ordinance include adding the types of subdivisions that can be built. (Neighborhood, Cluster or combination) This amendment would make a conservation subdivision mandatory for major subdivisions (3 lots or more). The Board would still have the authority to request a traditional subdivision if a conservation subdivision did not seem appropriate. The minimum frontage for a development would be changed to require a sufficient length to provide safe access for a right of way width plus intersection curve radius as defined in the Newfields Subdivision Regulations. The Board discussed adding a clause to require a perimeter buffer to prevent an entrance being put on a property boundary line. The requirement to provide a yield plan has been removed and the calculations will be based on the formula instead. Wetland permits would also be required to be in place before any bridges, culverts or crossings would be allowed. The total cumulative bonuses have been reduced to 10% from 20%. Open space and active recreation will be made a requirement of the conservation subdivision. The frontage requirement for single family and duplex lots has also been reduced and perimeter buffers will mandatory.

Bill asked if the density bonuses referred to lots or units. The inconsistency between lots and units already exists in the regulations and will be changed. The Board determined it to be units. Minor changes were made and the amended ordinance will be voted on by ballot at the March 14th town elections.

Expiration of Variances and Special Exceptions

This ordinance would establish expiration dates for variances and special exception. Mary August has reviewed and approved of the proposed ordinance. Existing variances

and special exceptions would be grandfathered. Reuben recommended getting a legal opinion in regards to existing variances. If a non-conforming use is discontinued for up to one year then the variance will be deemed expired and cannot be re-established without a new application to the ZBA. If a property is abandoned for a period of two years the variance will be deemed expired. There will be provisions provided for up to 2 one-year extensions on variances or special exceptions.

Commercial Architectural Ordinance

This ordinance will give the Planning Board control over the design of structures built on Route 108. It would apply to any new site plan review that comes before the Board. This will apply to any commercial use not just structures in the commercial zone. Minor changes were made and the amended ordinance will be voted on by ballot at the March 14th town elections. This model ordinance came from the Rockingham Planning Commission.

Access Management

The Board has brought forward this ordinance because of recent applications for development on Route 108. This would be a tool to prevent an applicant from getting a driveway permit through the State without the Town's approval. The ordinance will determine where the driveways and access points will be located on Route 108. They are considering this to be a proactive measure to control how the Route 108 corridor will look when it is developed. The Board discussed road classifications. The ordinance will define road classifications and standards.

Re-codification of the Zoning Ordinances

With the number of changes that have been made to the zoning book it needs to be re-codified. This will format the ordinances and put them in order.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Thursday January 19, 2006 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McKinnon